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duced; but no silver was deposited on the paper. Washing the glass with a certain kind of soap appears to interfere with the silvering process; while another kind of soap seems to be as effective as caustic potash.

Using a glass container, partially filled with the silvering solution, then (after the deposition of silver had started) filling the container with solution it was found on completion of the operation, that but little silver had deposited on the upper half of the container. The line of demarcation was sharp, just as though, once the deposition of silver had begun, the metal was attracted more readily to that part, of the receptacle. To conclude, it seems worth while to find a container that will not attract silver.

W. W. COBLENTZ

WASHINGTON, D. C.,
January 6, 1919

SYSTEMATIC PAPERS PUBLISHED IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

My friend, Dr. W. T. Holland, has sent me copies of his article on the above subject in *SCIENCE* of November 8.

We are all agreed in our wish for the advance of knowledge and that the "eternal verities" are the only thing that will count in the long run; but in zoology the Russian, Hungarian, Japanese and other languages have never been recognized and I can not think that Dr. Holland himself would recognize descriptions published in the language he cites—Choc-tau. German is, without doubt, a barbarous language only just emerging from the stage of the primitive Gothic character, and I venture to suggest that it would be to the advantage of science to treat it as such from the date August 1, 1914. The science of botany is in many ways in advance of zoology. At the Botanical Congress at Vienna in 1905 men of Russian and various other nationalities objected to their languages not being recognized in science and it was found that the only method of arriving at an agreement was to insist on a Latin diagnosis being added in systematic papers in all languages, and this was agreed to. This regulation, though it has obvious disadvantages, may be found neces-

sary in zoology also, the only alternative that I can see being descriptions in either English or French, the language of diplomacy. In recent-Japanese works on entomology an English description is always added to the Japanese text.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

A Synopsis of the Bats of California. By HILDA WOOD GRINNELL. University of California Publications in Zoology, Vol. 17, No. 12, pp. 223-404, pls. 14-24, 24 figs. in text. January 31, 1918.

This work constitutes a notable contribution to the literature of California mammalogy and is characterized by the minute detail, thoroughness of treatment, and painstaking accuracy which one has come to expect in the publications of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology of the University of California.

Following the introduction, the treatment is taken up under main headings as follows: Senses of bats, habits, voice, enemies, economic value, origin, geographic distribution, dentition, coloration, age-variation, sexual variation, nomenclature, classification, keys for identification, and table of comparative measurements, followed by treatment of the thirty-one forms belonging to eleven genera and three families of bats represented within the geographic limits of California.

Under each specific or subspecific heading appears a full annotated synonymy embracing the nomenclatural changes leading up to the name in current use and all references to the form as occurring in California. The particular species or subspecies is then discussed under the headings, diagnosis, description (including head, limbs and membranes, pelage, color, skull, teeth, measurements), synonymy and history, distribution, specimens examined, and finally natural history.

Data on senses and habits of bats are presented, chiefly compiled from the work of Halm, Ackert, Merriam, Miller, Howell and others, but supplemented by original observa-